

## DATA ABSTRACTION LAYER FOR A DATABASE

### Abstract

An abstraction layer (50) is provided for facilitating accessing a database (10) containing database records each including a plurality of fields stored in one or more  
5 tables (12, 14). The abstraction layer (50) includes a control table (52) containing control records corresponding to database fields. Each control record contains metadata associated with the corresponding database field. The abstraction layer (50) also includes at least one additional table (54, 56, 58, 60, 62, 64, 66, 70, 72, 74, 80) containing additional metadata. Each database field is selectively associated with one or more  
10 selected portions of the additional metadata through metadata contained in the control record corresponding to the database field. A user database application (30) accesses the database (10) using metadata obtained from the abstraction layer (50).